PROPHET MOHAMMAD'S MANNER OF PERFORMING PRAYERS

(May peace and blessings of Allah be on him)

By His Eminence
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All praise be to Allah alone, and may His peace and blessings be upon His messenger and bondsman our Prophet Mohammed, his family and his companions.

The objective of this concise pamphlet is to explain how prophet Mohammed (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to perform his prayers. I would like to present this explanation to every male and female Muslim so that they may strive to take up the Prophet's manner in performing their prayers as a model for them. It was narrated by A1 Bukhari that Prophet Mohammed (Peace and blessings of Allah be on him) had said:

> "Perform your prayers in the same manner you had seen me doing."

Therefore, here is the explanation for the Prophet's manner of prayer:

1. To perform completely the ablution, adopting the method commanded by Allah in the Quran:

> "O ye who believe, when ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces and your hands (and arms) to the elbows, rub your heads(with water) and (wash) your feet to the ankles."(S:6)
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> The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) said:
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> "Prayer without ablution is invalid."

2. To turn one's face and whole body towards the Ka'aba, The Holy House at Makkah, intending by heart to perform the prayer which he wants to fulfill, whether it is an obligatory prayer or a supererogatory prayer, the worshipper in all cases, should not pronounce his intention openly, because neither the Prophet nor his companions used to utter the intention for prayer. Thus, pronouncing the intention for prayer in audible voice is a heresy and an illicit action. Whether the individual be an Imam or performs his prayer individually, he should make (A Sutra) i.e. a curtain for his prayer.

Directing the face towards the Qibla (The Ka'aba at Makkah) is an imperative condition for every prayer. However, there are few exceptions for this rule explained in authoritative books for whom who wish to refer.

3. To pronounce "Takbirat A1 Ihram" that is to say "Allahu Akbar" celebrating by that the greatness of Allah and looking meanwhile, downwards to the place where he will prostrate.

4. To raise one's hands up to the level of the shoulders or near to the lobes of his ears, while pronouncing "Takbirat Al Ihram".

5. To put one's right hand over his left hand and left wrist, and put them both over his chest, as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used to do.

6. It is advisable that the worshipper recite this opening supplication saying:

> "Allahumma bald bayni wa bayena khatayaya kama boadta bayena al mashriki wal maghribi, Allahumma naqqiniy min khatayaya kama yonaqa al thawbo alabyndo min aldans.. Allahumma igysilniy min khatayaya bilmai wathalgi walbarad."
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> This supplication means:
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> "O Allah, separate me from my sins as You have separated the east and west. O Allah, cleanse me of my sins as the white rope is cleansed from dirt. O Allah, wash off my sins with water, snow and hail."
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> Or, may say instead:
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> "Sobhanaka Allahumma wa bihamdika wa~abaraka Ismoka wata'la jaddoka wala ilaha ghayroka"
>
> "Praise and glory be to Allah. Blessed be Your Name, exalted be Your Majesty and Glory. There is no god but You."

Or he may say any other supplications which the Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) used to say in his prayers. It is better to recite these supplications alternately, the first one in the morning prayer "Fajr", the second in the noon prayer "Zuhr", each one by turn. in conformity with what the Prophet used to do.

After reciting the opening supplication, the worshipper says:

"Aouzo billahi min al shaytani r ragim

Which means:

"I seek protection of Allah against the accursed Satan."

Then says:

"Bism illahi Rahmani Raheem"

Which means:

"In the name of Allah, the All Merciful, the All Compassionate."

and recites the Fatiha (The opening Sura of the glorious Quran). Prophet Mohammed, may peace and blessings be upon him, said:

> "Prayer without reciting the Fatiha is invalid".

The worshipper should say "A'meen" after reciting the Fatiha loudly if the prayer is said loudly, and whisper it in inaudible prayers. To be in conformity with the traditions of the Prophet, the worshipper is advised to recite verses from medium size Suras of the Quran in the Zuhr (noon), Asr (late afternoon), and Isha (night) prayers. As for the Fajr (morning) prayer, the worshipper is advised to recite a passage from the long Suras of the Quran. He has the choice in Maghrib prayer (Evening prayer) either to recite passages from the long Suras or from the short Suras 6 of the Quran.

7. Then, the worshipper bows in "Ruku" raising his hands up to the level of his shoulders or ears while saying "Allahu Akbar" "Allah is Great" then bends down, making his head and back on one level and putting his hands with the fingers spread on his knees. The worshipper should feel serenity and tranquillity while bowing, he should say thrice at least:

"Subhana Rabbiayl A'zim"

Which means:

"Glory be to my Lord, the Almighty."

It is advisable to say while bowing in addition to that:

"Subhanak Allahumma Rabbana wa bi hamdika, Allahumma Ighfir liy"

Which means:

"Glory be to Thee, O Allah, and I praise Thee, forgive me my sins."

8. To raise one's head up from bowing, raising one's hands to the level of his shoulders or ears, saying, in case of being Imam or praying alone:

"Sami'a Allahu liman hamidah"

Which means:

"Allah listens to him who praises Him"

While resuming the standing position, he should say:

"Rabbana wa laka al hamdu hamdan katheera'n tayyiban mobarakan feehiy mil'a ssamawati wa mila alardhi wa mil'a ma baynahoma wa mil'a ma Shita min shiyin ba'ad"

This supplication means:

"Our Lord, praise be fore Thee only, praises plentiful and blessed as to fill the heavens, the earth, what in between, and fill that which will please Thee besides them."

But if the worshipper is a follower, and led in his prayer by the Imam he should say when rising up "Rabbana wa lake alhamd... etc.

It is advisable for the Imam, the follower, or who prays alone to add also:

"You Allah who deserve all praises and all glory, your praising is the best and most true of whatever Your servant can say, we all are Your servants, Our Lord, no one can ever deprive aught of what You have bestowed and no one can ever give aught of what You have deprived."

The worshipper is advised to put his hands on his chest, as he had done before he bowed. Both Wa'il Ibn Haggar and Sahl Ibn Sai'yd reported that this was the manner of the Prophet when he used to raise his head up after bowing.

9. To prostrate saying "Allahu Akbar" "Allah is Great". He should touch the ground with his knees before touching it with his hands, if that is possible to him. If not, he is permitted to touch the ground by his hand before his knees. His fingers and toes should be directed towards the Qibla Makkah, and his hands should be stretched, and the fingers close together and not separated. In prostration, the worshipper should use these seven organs:

The forehead, the nose, both hands, both knees and the internal parts of the toes.

These seven organs should touch the ground. Then the worshipper should say thrice or more:

"Subhana Rabbiyal A'ala"

Which means:

"Glorified is my Lord, the Exalted."

It is advisable to say:

"Subhanaka Allahuma Rabbana wa bi hamdika, Allahuma Ighfir liy."

This means:

"Glory be to Thee, Our Lord, and I praise Thee. Our Lord, forgive me my sins."

It is recommendable for the worshipper to exceed more and more in supplications and ask for more from his Lord, because the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be on him, said:

Which means:

"As for bowing "Ruku" you should glorify your Lord during performing it, as for prostration, you should do your best to supplicate and ask for more from Him, because your supplications during prostration are more worthy to be accepted."

The worshipper should ask his Lord for prosperity both in this worldly life and in the Hereafter.

Whether it is an obligatory prayer or an optional prayer, the worshipper, while prostrating, should neither bring his hands close to his sides, nor stick his abdomen to his thighs, or his thighs to his legs. The worshipper's arms should be raised up from the ground because the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be on him, prohibited putting the arms and stretching them on the ground, ordering that "adjust your prostration, keep straight in it, and stretch not your hands on the ground as dogs do."

10. He should raise his head from prostration saying:

"Allahu Akbar" and lays his left foot Jlat on the ground and sits upon it, keeping his right foot erected, his hands on his thighs and knees, and says:

"O my Lord, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, provide me with your blessings and console me."

The worshipper should feel tranquillity during this pause.

11. To prostrate again saying "Allahu Akbar" and repeating during his prostration what he did and said in the first prostration.

12. Then the worshipper raises his head saying "Allahu Akbar" taking a pause similar to the pause between the two prostration; this is called "the pause for rest." It is recommended for the worshipper to do such a pause, but there is no sin if he desists from it. Then the worshipper rises up and stands supporting on his knees, or on the ground if he cannot support himself on the knees, reads the Fatihah (The opening Sura of the glorious Quran) and some other verses of the Quran and do as just as he did in the first Rakaah (unit of prayer). Those who pray behind the Imam should not compete with him in the prayer actions as the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

Which means:

The Imam is to be followed, if he says: "Allahu Akbar" which means "Allah is Great" then say the same after him. If he bows in "Ruku" bow after him. If he says "Samia l lahu liman hamidah" which means "Allah hears him who praises Him", then say: "Rabbana wa laka l hamd" which means "Our Lord! All praises are for Thee"; and if he prostrates, then prostrate after him". (Bukhari V:1 P.37)

13. If the prayer consists of two Rakaat (two units of prayer) as the morning prayer "Fajr", Feast prayer "Eid", or the Friday prayer "Jumu'a", the worshipper sits after the second prostration, with his right foot erect, sitting on his left foot laid down, putting his right hand on his right thigh, all his fingers close fisted save the index finger which he uses to point out as a sign for his monotheistic belief, and his left hand is put on his left thigh. There is nothing in the way, if the worshipper keeps both the little and ring fingers closed, while rounding his thumb and middle finger in a ring shape, and uses his index finger to point out as a sign for his monotheistic belief. It has been related that the Prophet, may peace and blessings of A1lah be on him, had practiced both of these ways, thus, it is advisable for the worshipper to perform the first way once and the other on the second time.

The worshipper reads the Tashahud while sitting and says:

"Al tahiyatu lilahi wasalawatu watayibatu Assalamu alayha ayuha n nabiyu wa rahmat u llahi wa barakatuhu. Assalamu alayina wa ala ibadi l lahi s salalihiyn. Ashadu ala ilaha ila lahu wa

ashadu anna Muhammadan abdoho wa raswuloh. Allahuma salliy ala Muhammad wa ala aali Muhamad, kama salayata ala Ibrahima wa aali Ibrahim. Inaka Hamidon Majid. Wa barik ala Mohammad wa ala aali Muhammad kama barkta ala Ibrahima wa aali Ibrahima. Inaka Hamidon Majid."

This means:

"Greetings, prayers and the good things of life belong to Allah. Peace, mercy and blessing of Allah be on you, O Prophet. May peace be upon us and on the devout slaves of Allah. I testify that there is no god but Allah and I testify that Mohammed is His slave and messenger. O Allah, bless Mohammed and his family as You blessed Ibrahim and his family. You are the Most Praised, The Most glorious. O Allah, bestow Your grace on Mohammed and his family as You bestwoed it on lbrahim and his family. You are the Most Praised, The Most glorious."

After reciting the Tashahud, the worshipper asks Allah's protection from four evils, he should say:

"My Lord, I ask your protection from torment of the Hell, torment of the grave the trials in life time and after death, and from the impostor Antichrist." The worshipper may ask Allah for prosperity in this worldly life and in the Hereafter, supplicate Allah to bestow His favors on his parents and other Muslims. He could do this in both obligatory and optional prayers. It has been reported by Ibn Massoud that the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, taught him how to recite the Tashahud and told him that the worshipper should invoke Allah and ask Him for the more beloved wishes which he likes, or, as it has been related in other wordings, the worshipper should ask Allah for whatever he wishes. In this manner, the servant can ask Allah for all the prosperity of this worldly life and the life to come. The worshipper terminates his prayer by turning his face to the right saying:

"As salamu alai kum wa rahmatu Allah" and to the left saying this salutation which means "Peace and mercy of Allah be on you."

14. In case of a three Rakaat prayer (prayer consisting of three units) as that of Maghrib prayer, (evening prayer), or a four Rakaat prayer like that of noon prayer (Zuhr), Asr prayer (late afternoon prayer) or, Isha prayer (night prayer), the worshipper stands up after reciting the Tashahud according to the manner stated before, and raises his hands up to the level of his shoulders saying (Allahu Akbar). The worshipper puts his hands over his chest as it had been explained before, and recites only the Fatiha. There is no objection if he adds to the Fatiha some other verses of the Quran while performing the third or fourth Rakaat (units of prayer) of noon prayer (Zuhr), because this was stated to be one of the manners adopted by the Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be on him, according to the tradition reported by Abi Saied.

After the third Rakaah of Maghrib prayer (evening prayer), and the fourth Rakaah of Zuhr (noon), Asr (afternoon) and Isha (night) prayers, the worshipper recites the Tashahud and terminates his prayers by saying:

"Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatu Allah"

while turning first to the right, and second to the left as it has been explained before.

It is not an obligatory duty, but it is a recommendable prophetic tradition to invoke Allah after terminating the prayer by asking Him forgiveness thrice and saying before turning one's face towards

his followers if he is the Imam:

"O Allah, Thou art peace and from Thee is peace, Thou art blessed, O possessor of Glory and Honour."

It is advisable for the worshipper to say:

"There is no god but Allah. He is the One. He has no partner. His is the dominion and to Him alone is the praise. He has power over all things. O Lord, none may withhold what You have given and none may give what You have withheld and the riches cannot avail a wealthy person with Thee. There is no might or power except by the support of Allah, There is no god but Allah and we do not worship but Him alone. To Him alone belong all bounties, to Him alone belong all grace, and to Him worthy praise is accorded. There is no god but Allah, to Whom we are sincere in devotion, even though the unbelievers may detest it."

It is also advisable to the worshipper to extol Allah 33 times by saying (Subhana Allah). Praise Him by saying (Al Hamdu El Allah) 33 times also by saying "Allahu Akbar" and the worshipper completes his supplications to be one hundred by saying once:

"There is no god but Allah. He is the One. He has no partner. His is the dominion and to Him alone is the praise. He has power over all things."

The worshipper adds to that the recitation of the verse of the Throne "Ayat Al Kursiy", Surat Al Ikhlas, Surat El Falaq, and Surat Al Nas. It is recommendable to recite these Suras thrice after the Fajr prayer (Morning prayer), and the Maghrib prayer (evening prayer) because this was reported to be one of the traditions of the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. As it had been stated before, all these after prayer supplications are optional and not obligatory.

Every Muslim, whether be male or female, is recommended to pray 12 Rakaat of supererogatory prayers every day: four of these Rakaat (units of prayers) are before noon prayer, two after it, two after Maghrib prayer, two after Isha (night) prayer and two before the morning prayer These super rogatory prayers are called (Rawatib) which means: "Certain supererogatory exercises of optional prayers." The Prophet peace and blessings of Allah be on him, preserved the performance of these optional prayers

wherever he settled. During his travels, he used to practice the two optional Rakaat before the morning prayer and also the Witr prayer (after the Isha prayer). There is no objection to perform these optional prayers in the mosque, but it is better to perform it at home, because the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be on him, said "The best of the prayers are those which are furfilled at one's own home, with exception to obligatory prayers which should be performed in congregation at the mosque."

Observance of fulfilling these optional prayers is a means for gaining admission to paradise. The Prophet, may peace and blessings of Allah be on him, said:

Which means:

"Whoever prays optionally twelve Rakoat every one day and night, Allah will reward him by an established dwelling in the paradise. "

It is also advisable to the Muslim to pray four optional Rakaat before Asr prayer (afternoon prayer), two before Maghrib prayer (evening prayer), and two before Isha prayer (night prayer), because this manner was reported to be one of the traditions of the Prophet. Allah, the Almighty says:

"Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah an excellent exemplar" (33:21).

And the Prophet (May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said:

Which means:

"Perform your prayer in the same manner as you had seen me doing."

Allah is He Who is Able to render us success and prosperity, and may Allah give His blessings and peace to our Prophet Mohammed son of Abdellah, his family, his companions and whoever follows his way till doomsday.

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